GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4913
ANSWERED ON:28.04.2008
INTERNATIONAL POTATO YEAR
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food and Agriculture Organisation has declared 2008 as International Potato Year;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the steps envisaged during this year for development of potato in the country;

(c) whether the potato farmers have suffered huge losses due to bumper crop during the current year;

(d) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(e) whether the problems of potato farmers have been further aggravated due to the failure of the Union Government to release its share towards the insurance claims of such farmers;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken to Mitigate the problems of the farmers?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a): Yes, Sir.2008 has been declared as International Potato Year by Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO),Rome,Italy.

(b): For enhancing horticulture production including potato, two Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely National Horticulture Mission and Horticulture Technology Mission for North Eastern and Himalayan States, are being implemented in the country.The schemes aimed at increasing production and productivity of horticultural crops including potatoes in the country to meet the growing demand in the domestic as well as export market.The assistance is provided to farmers for production and distribution by high yielding and export oriented varieties of potatoes to different agro climatic conditions for their wide coverage in the area expansion programme, integrated pest management,organic farming, transfer of technology programmes, training programmes etc. Central Potato Research Institute (ICAR) has chalked out various programmes such as kisan melas,potato school on All India Radio,Live Phone-in programmes on different aspects of scientific potato cultivation on Doordarshan for development of potatoes for the potato growers in the country.

(c) & (d): No,on the basis of prevailing prices in the market,there is no evidence to support that farmers have suffered huge losses.

(e) to (g): The share of Central Government for the year 2006-07 has already been released to the Agriculture Insurance Company of India which is the implementing agency of National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS).